CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A method for dynamically controlling access to configuration attributes for a printing device, comprising the steps of:

receiving a request for the printing device's configuration attributes at the printing device and the request is received from a requesting device;

making a determination of the configuration attributes supported by the printing device;

identifying markup language code associated with the configuration attributes supported by the printing device; and

transmitting the markup language code that is associated with the configuration attributes supported by the printing device, from the printing device to the requesting device.

2. A method as in claim 1, wherein the step of identifying markup language code further comprises the step of excluding markup language code that is associated with configuration attributes not supported by the printing device.

3. A method as in claim 1, wherein the step of identifying markup language code further comprises the step of identifying markup language code associated with groups of configuration attributes supported by the printing device.

4. A method as in claim 3, wherein the step of identifying markup language code further comprises the step of identifying groups of configurations attributes, wherein each group of configurations is associated with a markup language document.

5. A method as in claim 1, further comprising the steps of parsing an XML tree containing the printing device's configuration attributes and using the XML tree to create an HTML page that displays the printing device's configuration attributes.

6. A method as in claim 1, wherein the step of identifying markup language code further comprises the step of identifying markup language code associated with an individual configuration attribute supported by the printing device.

7. A method as in claim 1, wherein the step of receiving a request for the printing device's configuration attributes further comprises the step of receiving the request for the printing device's configuration attributes from a network browser into a printing device's embedded web server over a network.

8. A method as in claim 7, further comprising the step of using a local area network or the World Wide Web of the Internet as the network.

9. A method as in claim 1, further comprising the step of generating a device configuration interface to display the printing device's configuration attributes by including markup language code that is associated with the configuration attributes supported by the printing device.

10. A method as in claim 1, wherein the step of receiving a request for the printing device's configuration attributes further comprises the step of receiving a request for configuration attributes from a device driver for a printing device.

11. A system for dynamically determining configuration attributes for a printing device, comprising:

markup language code stored on the printing device, the markup language code being configured to describe and update the printing device's configuration attributes;

an embedded application in communication with the printing device, wherein the embedded application is configured to make a run-time determination of which markup language code corresponds to supported configuration attributes of the printing device; and

a communication module associated with the printing device, and the communication module is configured to receive requests for configuration attributes and transmit configuration attributes of the printing device.

12. A system as in claim 11, wherein the communication module is an embedded web server.

13. A system as in claim 11, wherein the printing device supports printer control language (PCL).

14. A system as in claim 11, wherein the markup language code includes HTML code.

15. A system as in claim 11, wherein the markup language code includes XML code.

16. A system for dynamically updating a printing device's configuration attributes, comprising:

a printing means for printing;

a markup language code means for describing configuration attributes, wherein the markup language code means is stored on the printing means;

an embedded application means stored in the printing means, wherein the embedded application means is for making a run-time determination of which markup language code corresponds to the configuration attributes supported by the printing means; and

a communication module means in the printing means, wherein the communication port means is for receiving requests for the configuration attributes and transmits configuration attributes supported by the device.

17. A system as in claim 16, wherein the communication module means is an embedded web server.

18. An article of manufacture, comprising:

a computer usable medium having computer readable program code embodied therein for dynamically controlling access to configuration attributes for a printing device, the computer readable program code means in the article of manufacture comprising:

computer readable program code for receiving a request for the printing device's configuration attributes;

computer readable program code for making a run-time determination of configuration attributes supported by the printing device;

computer readable program code for identifying markup language code associated with the configuration attributes supported by the printing device; and

computer readable program code for transmitting the markup language code that is associated with the configuration attributes supported by the printing device to the requesting device.